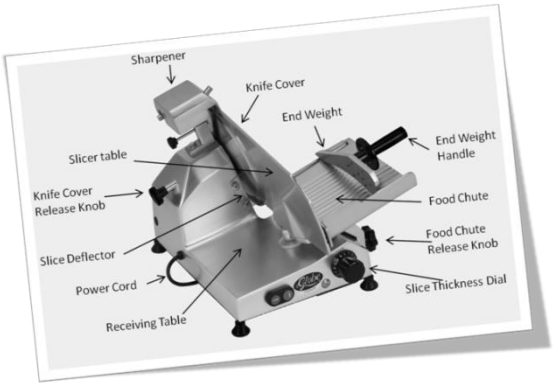
A MEMIC Minute:

Seven "Sins" of Slicer Safety

I never realized just how dangerous a meat slicer could be; but 20 years later I can still see the scar. According to the Washington State Department of Labor and Industry, between 2000 and 2004 ***more than 700 workers were injured while using a meat slicer***. I guess I was ahead of my time. While working for a small family owned restaurant I committed one, well more than one, of the **Seven Deadly Slicer Sins**, and in an instant, became a statistic.

Seven Deadly Slicer Sins:

#1) Operating the slicer with the blade guard removed.
#2) Leaving the slice thickness set to anything but zero when not in use.
#3) Pushing the food into the blade with your hand.
#4) Slicing pieces that are too small for the food pusher.
#5) Cleaning the slicer with the blade spinning.
#6) Cleaning the slicer with the power cord plugged in.
#7) Taking your eyes off the slicer when it is in operation.



For me it was #5 and #7. My penance was eight stitches and nerve damage to my left pinky finger. Not a good trade off for what little time was saved.

This is by no means a complete list. However, to avoid injury when using or cleaning the meat slicer always:

1) Read the user manual and complete required training before operating the slicer.
2) Inspect the equipment to ensure all safety devices and parts operate smoothly and efficiently.
3) Pressure the product being sliced with the weight handle/food pusher Use the slicer in manual mode before selecting automatic.
4) Follow all manufacturer and company instructions for cleaning the slicer.
5) Set the slice thickness to zero when finished slicing and before cleaning.
6) Turn off AND unplug slicer before cleaning.
7) Wear cut resistant gloves when operating or cleaning.

Remember, before your start; take a MEMIC Minute for slicer safety.

Check out these links on slicer safety and PPE:

Meat Slicer Safety – WorkSafe BC
Protecting Young Workers – OSHA
Cut resistant gloves – NH Bragg
Cut resistant gloves – Dyneema
Meat Slice Safety Videos - Youtube

© MEMIC